

# Kalamazoo Public Library

# 2010 Strategic Planning

Committee Information Packet



[www.kpl.gov](http://www.kpl.gov)



KALAMAZOO  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

## Contact Information

**Ann Rohrbaugh, Library Director**  
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[annr@kpl.gov](mailto:annr@kpl.gov)

**Kalamazoo Public Library**  
315 S Rose St, Kalamazoo MI 49007

# General Information

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## Community Committee

### Tim Bartik

W E Upjohn Institute

### Ramon Berlanga

Hispanic American Council

### Mary Lou Boughton

Greater Kalamazoo United Way

### Pat Coles-Chalmers

Kalamazoo Public Schools

### Denise Crawford

Family Health Center

### Ann Fergemann

Kalamazoo Community Foundation

### Brian Johnson

Kalamazoo County Commissioner

### John L. Jones Jr.

Bronson Healthcare Group

### Ellen Kisinger-Rothi

Housing Resources Inc

### Mike Larson

Greater Kalamazoo United Way

### Barbara Hamilton Miller

Kalamazoo City Commissioner

### Ken Nacci

Downtown Kalamazoo Inc

### Mary Oudsema

Kalamazoo Gazette

### Denise Posie

Immanuel CRC

### Karen Santamaria

Kalamazoo Public Library

### Dave Sheldon

Friends of Kalamazoo Public Library

### Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh

Michigan Works!

W.E. Upjohn Institute

### Tim Terrentine

Douglass Community Association

### D. Terry Williams

Western Michigan University (ret)

### Valerie Wright

Diekema Hamann,

KPL Board of Trustees

## Meetings

Tuesday, February 2, 10 am to 3 pm

Tuesday, March 2, 10 am to 3 pm

Central Library, Van Deusen Room, 315 S. Rose St.

Lunch provided.

# About the Library

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## Vision

Kalamazoo Public Library helps create a community where people aspire to learn, engage, and thrive.

## Mission

Kalamazoo Public Library champions reading, ignites imagination, and ensures access to information and ideas.

## Core Values

To advance the library's mission we value:

- Literacy and lifelong learning
- Dynamic, responsive, and respectful service
- Intellectual freedom and the patron's right to open access
- A professional and productive workforce
- A workplace characterized by integrity, compassion, and respect
- Diversity across all aspects of organizational life
- Collaboration, civic engagement, and social responsibility
- Stewardship and innovation

## Governance

Kalamazoo Public Library became a district library in April 1990 pursuant to Michigan Compiled Law 397.171. Four partners comprise the district: the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo Public School District, and Oshtemo and Kalamazoo townships. A board of seven publicly elected trustees governs the library. The next trustee election will be held in 2011.

## Library Board of Trustees

Valerie L. Wright, President  
Robert Paul Brown, Vice President  
James E. VanderRoest, Treasurer  
Cheryl TenBrink, Secretary  
Cynthia Addison, Trustee  
Lisa Godfrey, Trustee  
Fenner Brown II, Trustee



# Organization

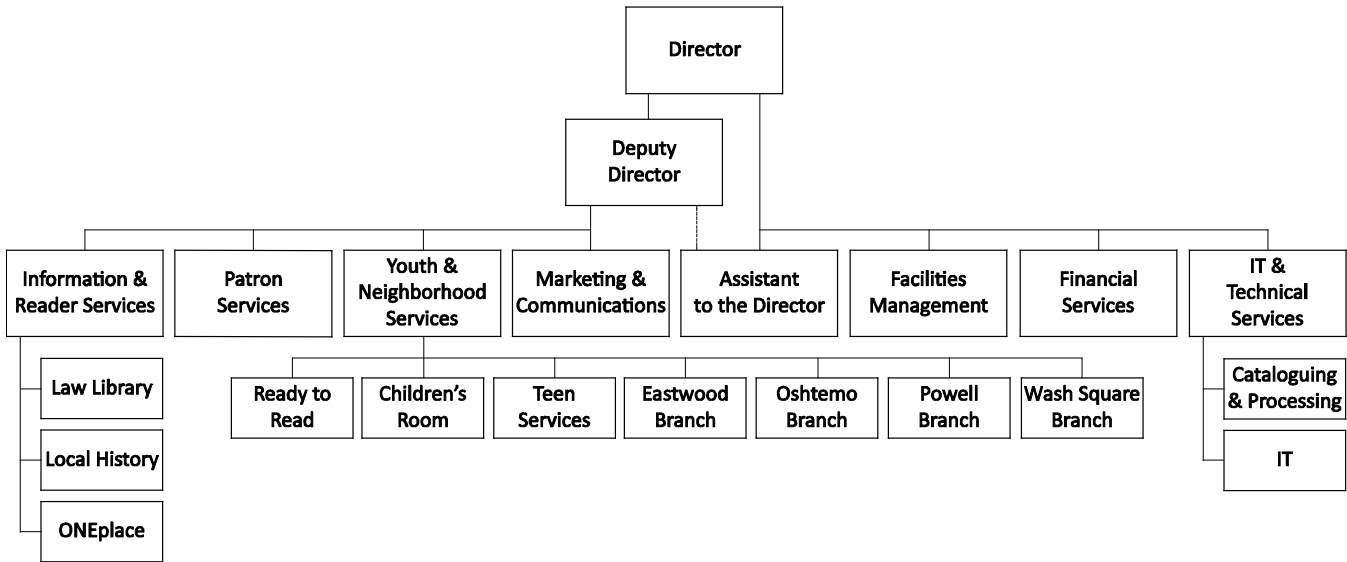
## Library Management Team

Ann Rohrbaugh, Director  
Mary Doud, Deputy Director  
Ernie Clemence, Facilities Management  
Martha Coash, Assistant to the Director  
Michael Cockrell, Information and Reader Services  
Marti Fritz, Marketing and Communications

Gary Green, Information Technology and Technical Services  
Kevin King, Patron Services  
Diane Schiller, Financial Services  
Susan Warner, Youth and Neighborhood Services

## Staff

KPL’s staff includes about 85 salaried positions: the director, deputy director, six department heads, 20.25 FTE librarians, 12.75 supervisory/technical, and 44.4 library assistants. The library also employs about 70 hourly aides. Collective bargaining agreements with two unions govern the library’s relationship with approximately ¾ of KPL’s salaried employees: librarians belong to the Kalamazoo Professional Librarians Association; assistants to the Kalamazoo Public Library Support Personnel. Both unions are Michigan Education Association affiliates.

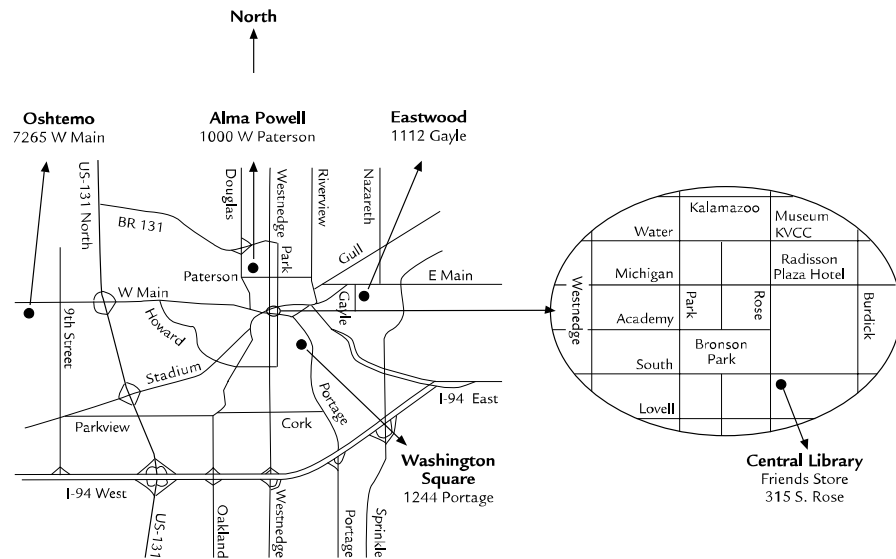


## Locations

Kalamazoo Public Library provides library services through five facilities: Central Library, downtown, and four neighborhood branches, Eastwood Branch, Oshtemo Branch, Powell Branch, and Washington Square Branch. KPL owns four of these buildings; the Powell Branch space is leased from the Douglass Community Association.

KPL reaches out to patrons who aren’t able to travel to a KPL outlet through Via Mail, which mails materials to homebound patrons with a free return envelope, and deposit collections at more than a dozen community sites. Bookmobile service will be discontinued this spring.

## Map of Kalamazoo Public Library Facilities



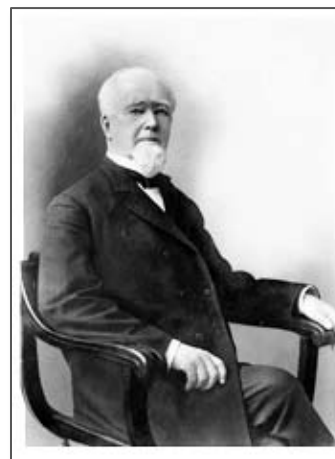
## History

### Beginnings

Kalamazoo Public Library began in 1860 when School District No. 1 of Kalamazoo inherited 123 volumes from a disbanded township library. Kalamazoo Public Schools continued to govern the library for 130 years.

In 1872, the school board made the growing collection of 2,800 books available to the public for the first time, from a small room behind their meeting place in City Hall. Over the next 20 years, the library moved twice for more space to accommodate its expanding collection and services.

In 1890, Dr. and Mrs. Edwin Van Deusen (for whom KPL's Van Deusen Room is named) gave the city \$50,000 to construct a library; Kalamazoo citizens raised \$10,000 to buy a lot at the corner of South and Rose streets for the new library. The handsome stone building opened May 15, 1893; it stood until 1957. The second building opened in 1959. The current building, designed using the structural steel framework of the '59 building, opened in 1998.



*The Van Deusens*



## Commitment to Excellence

Since its beginning, Kalamazoo Public Library has been committed to expanding and improving its service to the public. In 1895, the library became one of the first in the nation to create a separate reading room devoted to children. In 1907, the library became a government document depository. Between 1910 and 1930, the library opened six school stations, three branch libraries, and established library services at both hospitals. Collections that started at KPL in the 19th century launched the Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. By 1932, these collections had moved out of the library building and into adjoining houses next door.

## District Library Created

Kalamazoo Public Library became a district library by public referendum in 1990, the first created under a new Michigan District Library Law from a school district-governed public library. Voters in the new library district approved an operating millage of 2.88 mills for twenty years by a margin of 3 to 1.

This new autonomy offered the library opportunity for growth and development. Studies over a two-year period revealed the need to improve the quality and delivery of library services by renovating or replacing all five library facilities and expanding associated operational expenses, increasing materials budgets, investing in new technology, and strengthening youth services. Library district voters supported a second twenty-year millage in 1995 to accomplish this renaissance. The capital improvement project concluded in March 1998 with the opening of Kalamazoo Public Library's downtown building.

## Named Library of the Year

In 2002, Library Journal and the Gale Group honored Kalamazoo Public Library with the coveted national Library of the Year award as the library that most profoundly demonstrated outstanding service to its community in the previous year. A distinguished panel of judges selected KPL based on its investment in technology infrastructure, its many partnerships and collaborations, and its bold steps to become a district library by lobbying for state legislation.



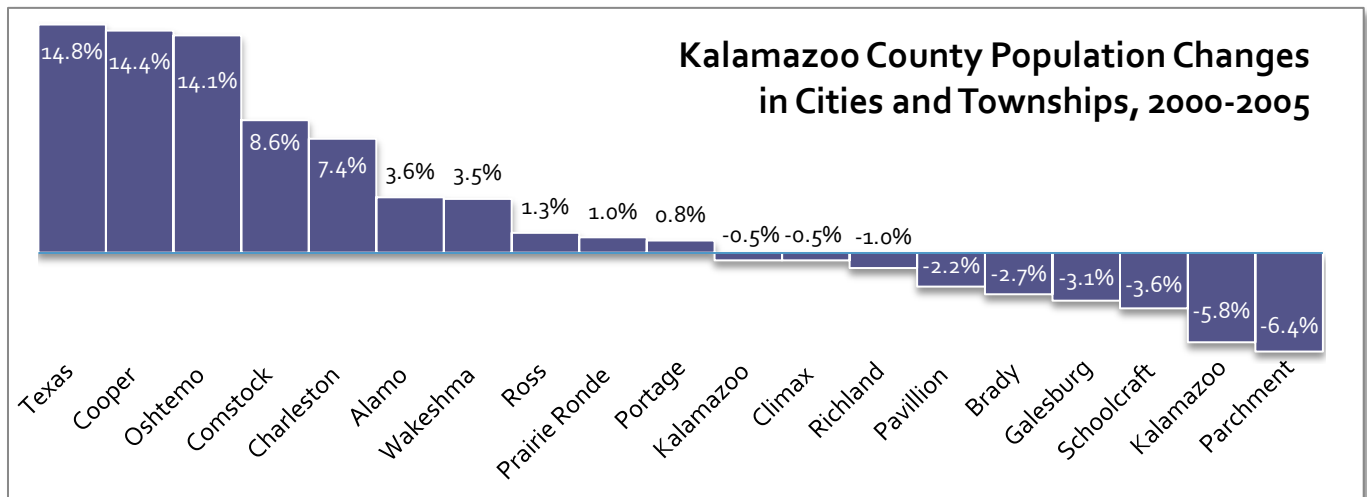
# Services

## Service Population

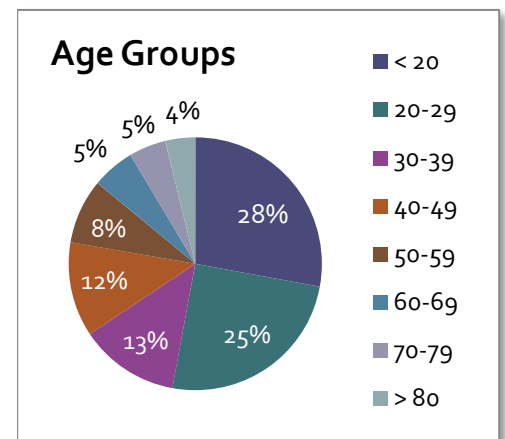
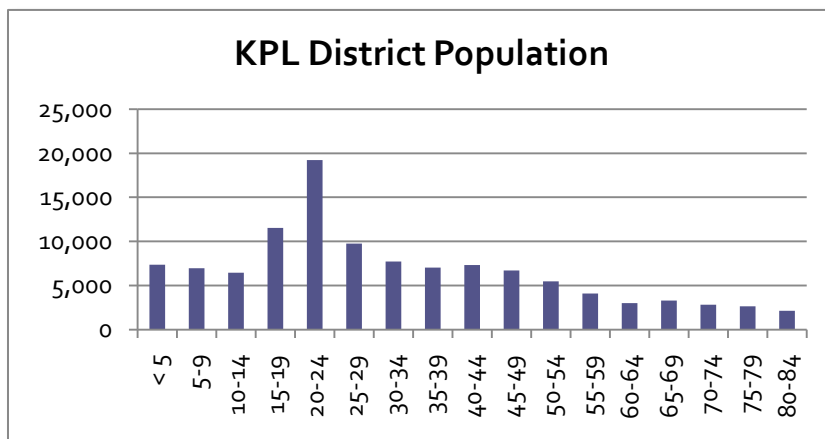
Kalamazoo Public Library serves a library district population of 119,517. Reciprocal Borrowing agreements with other public libraries within the region extend circulation to the residents of most communities in Kalamazoo County as well as Battle Creek (Calhoun County) and Van Buren District Library (Van Buren County.) KPL has 58,428 registered borrowers and issues between 9,000-10,000 new cards each year.

## Demographics

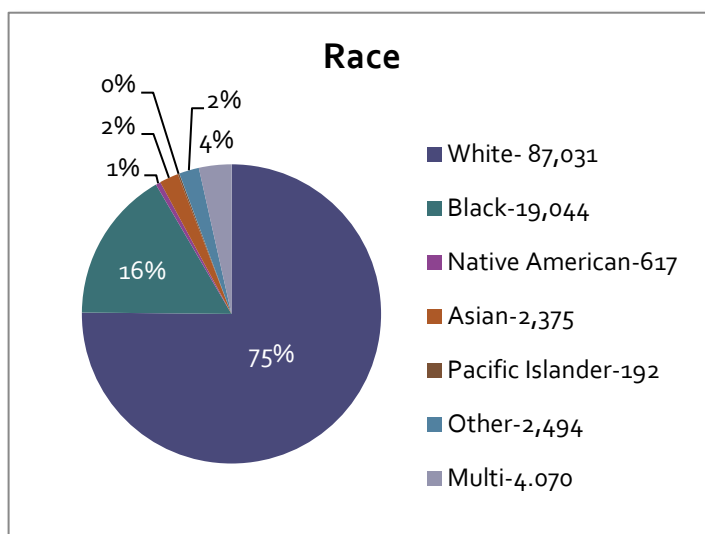
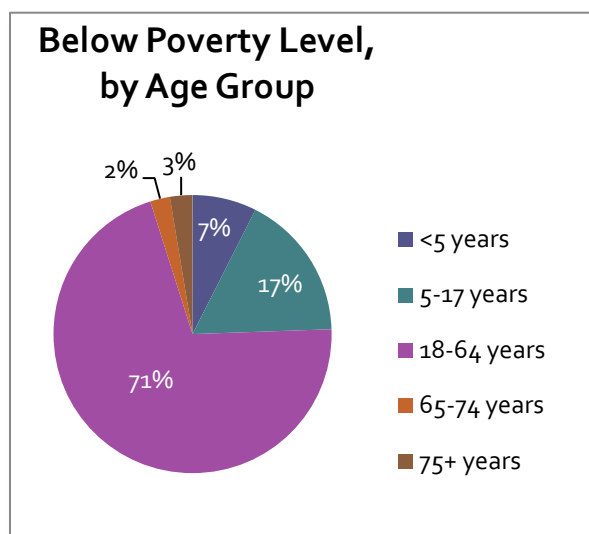
From 2000 to 2005, Kalamazoo County's population grew 0.8% overall. Within Kalamazoo County, cities and townships grew at varying rates. Oshtemo Township experienced the third greatest growth at 14.1%, while the City of Kalamazoo lost 5.8% of its population. All 2005 data below is based on estimates inferred from the 2000 Census. Note that this data precedes the announcement of the Kalamazoo Promise late in 2005.



The chart and graph below show the age distribution of Kalamazoo Public Library residents: 53% are under 30; 60,232 are female, 55,591 are male.

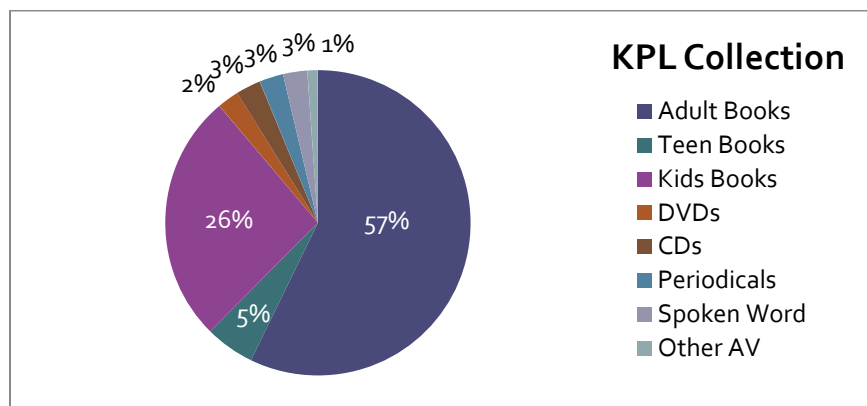


Other statistics: 4,456 residents report they are of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. 337 residents aged 16-19 are not enrolled in school and are considered dropouts, while 7,575 residents age 25 or older have not earned a high school diploma or GED. More than 20 percent of library district residents, primarily in the city of Kalamazoo, live below the poverty level; another 19 percent live at or just above the poverty level.



## Collection

Kalamazoo Public Library's collection of half a million items features books, music, movies, newspapers, magazines, databases, and more. The library's in-district patrons may also borrow materials through MeLCat, the Michigan Electronic Library Catalog. This statewide materials sharing system offers millions of books, CDs, DVDs, musical scores, manuscripts, and other materials from more than 300 libraries across the state.



KPL has added more popular, leisure time materials in the last few years, especially in the audiovisual area, which loans books on the Apple iPod and Sony Reader, plus downloadable fiction and nonfiction classics and bestsellers. This new emphasis contributes to KPL's growing circulation. The total number of items loaned has increased more than 20% since FY 2004-05, to almost one million last year. KPL collection strengths include the nonprofit and business collections, the Government Documents Depository, the Law Library, the Local History Room, and age appropriate materials for children.



Local History staff members have created more than 150 online vignettes/short histories in 17 different topic areas – including 215 about historic Kalamazoo structures – plus almost 40 historic photo galleries. Local History Room staff began indexing the *Kalamazoo Gazette* and other local publications in 1972; this process became electronic in 1981. Today, more than three million citations to vital statistics, Kalamazoo people, places, and events are available online through the library catalog.

*History Room essays rank among the most popular pages on the site.*

**Essays: All About Kalamazoo History**

Kalamazoo's [unusual name](#), its central location between Detroit and Chicago, its thriving and balanced economy, its rich [educational](#) tradition, and its long-time interest in the [arts](#) have given the city a unique and colorful history.

**New**

- [Hutson B. Colman House: 813 W. South Street](#)
- [Albert White: African American Builder Broke Racial Barriers](#)
- [Bookmobile Service](#)
- [Hillcrest Elementary School](#)
- [The Dilemma of Downtown Parking](#)
- [Bronson Methodist Hospital](#)
- [Borgess: Kalamazoo's First Hospital](#)
- [Kalamazoo Church Fires](#)

**Popular**

- [Gibson Inc., Music Makers](#)
- [Kalamazoo Stove Company](#)
- [Vine Neighborhood](#)
- [Kalamazoo Gazette](#)
- [Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital](#)

**Essay Topics**

<a href="#">General Topics</a>	<a href="#">Education</a>	<a href="#">Neighborhoods</a>
<a href="#">Arts &amp; Entertainment</a>	<a href="#">Fires &amp; Firemen</a>	<a href="#">Parks</a>
<a href="#">Biographies</a>	<a href="#">Government</a>	<a href="#">Recreation</a>
<a href="#">Business</a>	<a href="#">Health</a>	<a href="#">Religion</a>
<a href="#">Cemeteries</a>	<a href="#">Houses &amp; Buildings</a>	<a href="#">Towns</a>
	<a href="#">Kalamazoo Public Library</a>	

**Local History**

- [Genealogy](#)
- [ALL ABOUT KALAMAZOO:](#)
- [Essays: All About Kalamazoo](#)
- [General Topics](#)
- [Arts & Entertainment](#)
- [Biographies](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Cemeteries](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Fires & Firemen](#)
- [Government](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Houses & Buildings](#)
- [Kalamazoo Public Library](#)
- [Neighborhoods](#)
- [Parks](#)
- [Recreation](#)
- [Religion](#)
- [Towns](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Photo Galleries](#)
- [Video Presentations](#)
- [THE COLLECTION:](#)
- [New Materials](#)
- [Focus On Local History Collection](#)
- [Books](#)
- [City Directories](#)
- [Clippings & Misc.](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [Maps](#)
- [Microfilm](#)
- [Newspapers](#)
- [Obituary Requests](#)
- [Photographs](#)
- [Yearbooks & Student Catalogs](#)
- [Local History Room](#)
- [Help and How To](#)
- [News](#)
- [Calendar](#)

*A genealogist uses the Local History Room's online resources.*



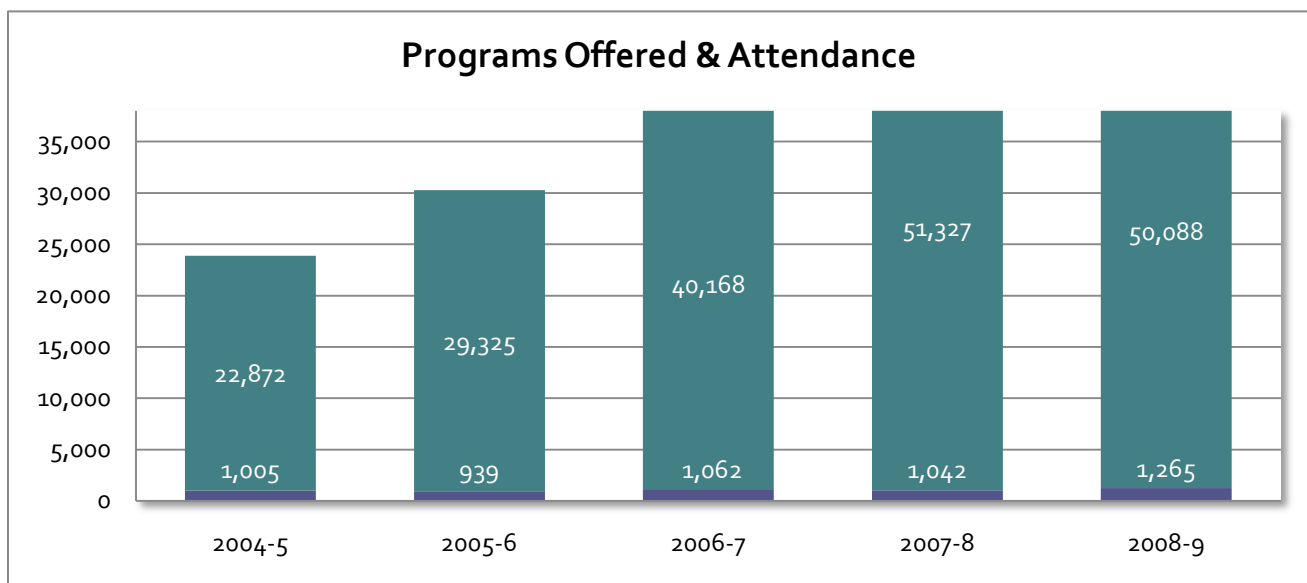
# Programs

Programs affirm the library's role as a civic gathering place. A wide range of free events offer opportunities to highlight collections, share information and expertise, and forge partnerships with external groups.

Programs offered by the library are consistent with the library's core values and meet one or more of the following objectives:

- To provide free leisure activities for the public
- To nurture appreciation for books and reading
- To promote literacy and lifelong learning
- To educate or inform on a variety of topics
- To provide a forum for exchanging ideas
- To promote cultural awareness
- To respond to current issues facing the community and society

Since 2004, the number of programs offered by KPL has grown 25.8%, to 1,265, while attendance at KPL events has increased almost 77%, to 36,793. KPL's meeting rooms are also used by the public for events not sponsored by KPL. That use has increased. Attendance at both KPL and public events is shown below.



## Promoting Reading

The Kalamazoo Promise seeks to transform the greater Kalamazoo Community into “a world leader in education, investing in youth to elevate the quality of life for each resident.” Keeping this promise means that Kalamazoo must also become a literate and reading community. Kalamazoo Public Library’s vision to “create a community where people aspire to learn, engage, and thrive” actively supports the challenge of the Promise.



### Early Childhood Literacy

To fulfill this vision and its mission to champion reading, KPL's monthly storytimes serve children from birth through age five and provide an average of 25 programs for Head Start classrooms, preschools, and day care facilities each month. Ready to Read, KPL's nationally-known early childhood literacy initiative, sends 86 volunteers to 14 community sites each week; they contributed more than 2,000 hours reading 9,000+ books to children last year. Ready to Read also raises funds to give away almost 20,000 books to young children each year through 38 book distribution sites, including numerous health care and human service providers.

### Summer Reading Games

Research shows that all students experience reading loss if they don't continue to read over the summer. KPL helps prevent that loss by making reading a fun summer activity for the whole family. Readers of all ages earn prizes during the summer reading games. Last year's games ended with a party featuring a variety of activities throughout the Central Library that drew more than 1,000 summer readers.

### Global Reading Challenge

KPL's Global Reading Challenge involves about 500 4th- and 5th-grade students from public and private schools throughout the library district. Each year, classroom teams read ten books selected by KPL's children's librarians, then answer questions in quiz bowls held in schools and each library, culminating in a final district-wide competition among the five teams with the highest scores.



### Involving Teens

Teen librarians attract tweens and teens, ages 12-18, through fun programs like the Teen Advisory Board, Teen Read Week and Read-a-Thon, the Teen Filmmaker Fest, Teen Halloween, and a variety of activities throughout the year. KPL's teen Galley Review Group is just one of 15 selected throughout the U.S. to read new books written for teens, sometimes months before they are published. They review the books they read online, provide feedback for publishers, and nominate titles for the Teens National Top Ten list.



## Variety for Adults

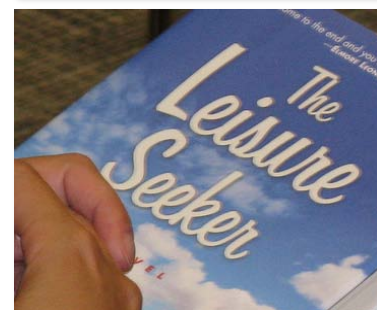
Author, illustrator, and musician visits are among the most popular events at KPL. For 32 years, librarians, teachers, youth workers, parents, and college students have attended the annual Youth Literature Seminar. Last year's event featured bestselling authors Lisa McMann and James A. Owen on escape literature for teens.

David Small launched the book tour for *Stitches*, his National Book Award-nominated graphic memoir, at KPL last fall. KPL's concert series fills the Van Deusen Room at the downtown location each month. KPL will host author-singer-songwriter Wesley Stace (aka John Wesley Harding) in February.

KPL librarians also develop programming that ensures access to information and ideas, especially in areas related to KPL collections. The Law Library works with the Bar Association to offer several pro bono legal clinics each month.

The Local History Room provides beginning and advanced genealogy programs and works with local and Michigan historians to offer neighborhood, regional, and old house history programs. Two upcoming programs feature Great Lakes shipwrecks and lighthouses.

The business librarian works with SCORE to offer small business counseling and with the Michigan Small Business and Technology Center on programs about starting a small business, writing a business plan, and business research essentials. A series of programs helps job seekers develop resumes, hone their interviewing skills, and learn new on-line job seeking techniques.



*The Aerial Angels' performance is a big hit each holiday season.*

# Collaboration

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Throughout its history, Kalamazoo Public Library has worked with a wide variety of organizations to better meet community needs, in keeping with the library's vision and mission. Collaboration enables KPL to expand services for under-served groups and to gain access to new funding sources. KPL managers and librarians engage in a wide variety of civic activities, from economic and community development committees to the schools and cultural organizations. Highly visible partnerships include ONEplace@kpl, the Law Library, Ready to Read, and Reading Together.



## ONEplace@kpl

KPL recently launched ONEplace@kpl, a nonprofit management support center, with ongoing funding from local foundations. ONEplace (stands for Opportunities for Nonprofit Excellence) provides capacity-building skill training and support to Kalamazoo County nonprofits. Since opening in March of 2009, ONEplace has offered more than 60 programs and served 1,500 people.



## Law Library

Kalamazoo County government worked with KPL to move the Law Library into the Central Library in 1998, increasing its collection and making it much more accessible to the public, as well as legal professionals. The county continues to provide about \$50,000 to help fund the Law Library each year. The Law Library also works with individual lawyers, law practices, and the Kalamazoo County Bar Association to develop programs and a wide variety of materials on legal issues for the lay public.



## Ready to Read

Ready to Read, KPL's early childhood literacy initiative, partners with more than 50 organizations, including Bronson Methodist Hospital, pediatric practices, and medical clinics such as MSU/Kalamazoo Center for Medical Studies and the Family Health Center; Kalamazoo County's Head Start, WIC, Nurse-Family Partnership, and Healthy Babies/Healthy Start; Kalamazoo Public Schools' Even Start; K/RESA's Preprimary Evaluation Team; the Elizabeth Upjohn Community Healing Center, Loaves and Fishes, and many other agencies that serve families and children.



## Reading Together

Reading Together, KPL's annual community reading program, typically offers dozens of programs, attracts thousands of readers, and involves 35-50 community organizations, including foundations, schools, health and social service agencies, cultural, civic and religious organizations, businesses, media, local governments,



and other public libraries. This year's program features a special partnership with Western Michigan University, focused on the nationally-acclaimed exhibit, *RACE: Are We So Different*, on display at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum from October 2, 2010, to late January, 2011. Reading Together chose *Snow Falling on Cedars*, this year's book, because it addresses issues of cultural diversity, cultural assimilation, and cultural misunderstanding, themes raised by the exhibit.

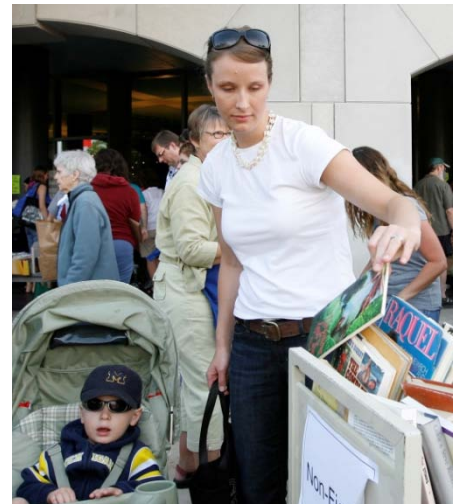
*More than 500 readers came to see last year's Reading Together author Rick Bragg.*

## Good Friends

Kalamazoo Public Library feels blessed to have the support of a very active Friends organization. The Friends organized in 1959 "to give the library more community support and to encourage its future development." In their early years, the Friends hosted used book sales, raising nearly \$8,000 each year for the benefit of the library. Today, the Friends sell "gently used books, very gently priced" from a bookstore in the lower level of the Central Library as well as two "sidewalk" sales each year. The Friends recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary by giving a check to the library for \$50,000.



*Enjoying the kids' area in the store.*



*Hundreds shop for bargains at the Friends' Super Saturday annual summer sidewalk sale.*

# Technology

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The library replaced its card catalog with an online database in 1991. KPL offers more than 70 online databases researched and compiled by information specialists on a wide variety of subjects; many may be used by KPL district residents on their personal/home computers.

## Computer Training

A computer training lab opened in the new downtown building in 1998; the computer trainer offered 257 sessions of more than a dozen different classes to almost 1,700 students last year. More than 130 computers and a high-speed wireless network are available for public use in KPL's five buildings. The public computers are used an average of 695 times system-wide each day.

## Website

KPL first established an internet presence in 1996, [www.kpl.gov](http://www.kpl.gov). The current site, launched in 2008, has truly become a virtual branch. Last year, web visitors viewed KPL's almost 20,500 web pages more than two million times. KPL also uses electronic newsletters, staff blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube to communicate with library patrons.

## RFID

A generous anonymous bequest allowed KPL to install a RFID (radio frequency identification) inventory system last year. KPL recently remodeled the Central Library circulation desk, setting up three checkout kiosks based on RFID for patron use and built a new, streamlined information desk. RFID has helped KPL manage increased circulation without increasing staff.



# Funding and Budget

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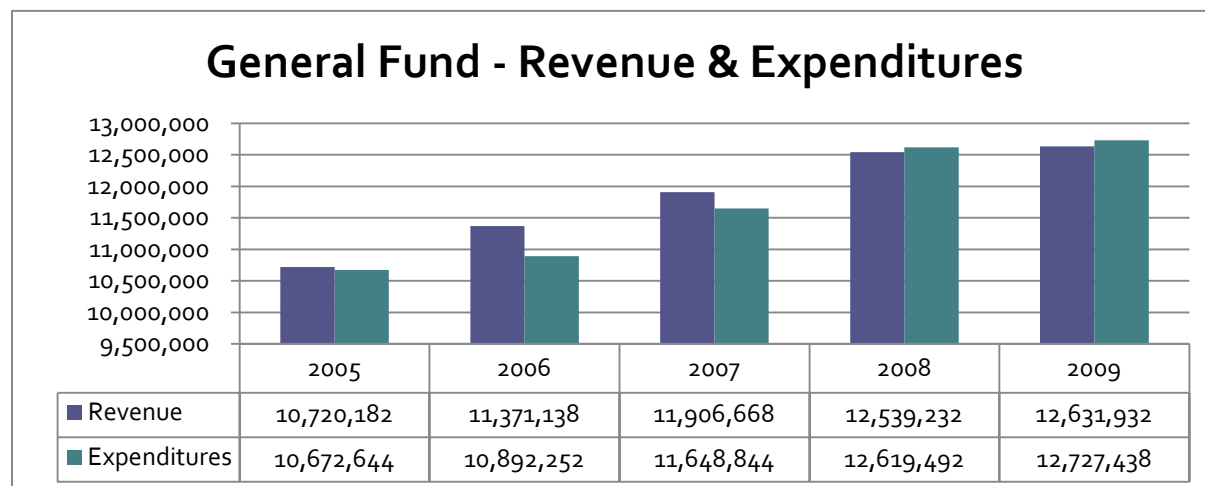
## Millage Campaign

In 2009, KPL conducted a successful campaign to renew the 1990 millage for another 20 years. Voters again supported the request by 3 to 1. The original 2.88 mills have been reduced to 2.7782 by the Headlee Amendment to Michigan's constitution.

Unfortunately, renewing the millage at the same rate does not guarantee the same revenue to the library. Property tax values remained flat in KPL's district this year and experts estimate that statewide values will drop 4.5% next year and another 9% in 2011.

## Revenue and Expenditures

Kalamazoo Public Library receives 92.5% of its revenue from property taxes assessed within the library district. The remainder comes from other sources, such as state aid, District Court penal fines, grants, and gifts.



## Budget Challenges

Declining property taxes and other possible reductions in revenue—elimination of state aid, a smaller share of penal fines, and reduced interest income—have resulted in more than \$678,000 in budget cuts and may require another \$550,000 reduction.

To date, KPL has met budget challenges by reducing energy use, delaying equipment purchases, trimming funds for materials, eliminating bookmobile service, and reducing staff positions/reassigning or eliminating work following retirements and resignations.

Those measures are no longer enough—KPL must look for greater cost savings. To that end, KPL's board of trustees authorized a strategic planning process to determine future service priorities. Such a process should make it easier for KPL to budget and plan for library programs and services that appropriately meet community needs best filled by a public library.